

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, we have heard here again this morning that this Congress and the Congress before it has not appropriated money for education when in fact we have appropriated more money every year than the year before. So much of the debate about education in the Congress is about who controls the money and about whether the Federal Government is going to keep its word to local school districts.

Any time I am in the Seventh District in Missouri and ask an educator what is their biggest problem with the Federal Government, they always say, "Special education mandates." When we mandated special education, we said we would provide 40 percent of the money. At the beginning of the 104th Congress, we were providing 6 percent. Now we are providing 12 percent.

Part of the debate about teachers is whether some of those teachers could be special education teachers and help us get to what we have promised local districts we could do. But, no, that is not good enough. We have to tell local districts exactly what classes those teachers should be in and special education would not be one of them unless we prevail in this debate about education.

ROLE OF EDUCATION IN ONGOING BUDGET BATTLE

(Mr. GREEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GREEN. Mr. Speaker, public education is a local responsibility but a national concern. We have provided more police on the street to make our neighborhoods safe. Now, let us go the next step and spend it smarter by providing 100,000 new teachers to make our country stronger and hopefully not have to provide more police on the street. Let us help local public schools and parents have smaller classes to teach and mentor those children so we do not need those 100,000 new police officers in the next generation.

My Republican friends oppose the new 100,000 teachers and the smaller class sizes. In fact one of their Members was quoted a few months ago as saying that public education is a relic of communism. Well, my district does not share that. More than 90 percent of my children go to public schools.

My Republican friends brought a bill to the floor, the Labor-HHS appropriations bill about 2 weeks ago that would cut first Goals 2000, which is a block grant, 51 percent; cut School-to-Work 40 percent; cut American Reads Challenge 100 percent; cut summer youth jobs 100 percent.

Where are the priorities they have for education?

WORD TO LIBERALS: GO HOME AND DO SOME REAL WORK

(Mr. THUNE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. THUNE. Mr. Speaker, I have a suggestion to all my friends on the other side of the aisle who think that we are not spending enough time here in Washington. Do what some of the rest of us do. Go home and do some real work. Find out what is going on in your local communities and your schools. Go home and work on a Habitat for Humanity house or something like that.

I know our liberal friends think it is important that we spend more time in Washington. We do not define good government by how much time we spend here creating new bureaucracies, hiring new bureaucrats, raising taxes, or how many bills we pass. We define good government by how much power we give back to communities and to people in this country, hardworking Americans. We are doing what we can to free up Americans to make a difference in their communities. That is where the real work is getting done. I invite my liberal colleagues to go home and check it out.

DEMOCRATS KEEP REPUBLICANS IN TOWN TO FUND EDUCATION

(Mr. DEFAZIO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DEFAZIO. Day 111 of this Congress. This Congress has worked 111 days this year. The average American has worked 202 days so far this year. The Republican majority is being held against its will in Washington, D.C. They wanted to adjourn last Saturday after 108 days of work. Because so far as they were concerned, their job was done. They had served the special interests. They had killed insurance industry HMO reform, they had killed for the tobacco industry cessation of teenage smoking, and they had served Wall Street very well.

When they wanted to adjourn last Saturday, there were zero dollars for the after-school programs, zero dollars for the school-to-work program, zero dollars for new teachers. Today because the President and the Democrat minority kept them in town to work just a few more days, they might even put in 115 days this year, those programs are funded and now they want to say, "Well, it is really about how we want to spend the money, that billion dollars on the new teachers. It is about local control." That is not the point. They did not want to spend a penny on these new education programs. It is very clear. You wanted to adjourn without one cent additional for education.

REPUBLICANS DEMAND ACCOUNTABILITY FOR EDUCATION DOLLARS

(Mr. BALLENGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, the President, as the gentleman said, wants 100,000 new teachers. I am opposed to giving the Federal Government any more power over local schools. But I am willing to compromise. So I would like to say something that might surprise my Democrat colleagues. I am willing to accept the President's proposal to hire 100,000 new teachers but the President must then agree to test them for competence and he must also agree to discharge them for incompetence.

Uh-oh, I am just guessing, but suddenly the President may not be so enthusiastic about his idea for 100,000 new teachers. The special interests who currently protect incompetent teachers at all costs would go ballistic and find a way to block the proposal. Suddenly the talk about education and the children would end because a proposal with more Federal dollars that demanded accountability for those dollars would be automatically unacceptable.

So how many on the other side would be willing to take up my proposal?

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EDUCATION IS TOO IMPORTANT TO LEAVE THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OUT OF IT

(Mr. ALLEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, we hear a lot of talk these days about the education proposals that the Democrats are fighting for, and those on the other side of the aisle say it is a matter of federal control versus local control. Democrats, they say, want federal control. They made the same arguments when we tried to get 100,000 police on the streets of this country, and that is local control. It may be federal money, but it is local control, and that is what Democrats are arguing for now.

Education is simply too important in this country to leave it to someone else. We all have to participate. We all have to participate in fighting crime, and that is what we did when we asked for 100,000 new police on the streets, and we got them in every district around this country. Now what we are saying is education is too important to leave the federal government out of it. The public servants who work for this government, for the state government and the local governments have to join together.

Mr. Speaker, we need support for 100,000 new teachers in this country. That is what we are fighting for as Democrats right now, and we are not going home until we have that as part of this agenda. There has been plenty